I: Karsten--186 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro
842 (1928-29)

"....the Jibaro Indian generally wants a large progeny, and when he marries many and young women he has of course hopes of getting many children."

l: Karsten--217-218 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro
116, 842, 775 (1928-29)

"The ideas which the Indians entertain about the physiological significance of the sexual act are of particular interest and it may be proper to mention them here. The Indians certainly realize, in a general way the connection between sexual intercourse and pregnancy, but about generation and conception they have their own peculiar theory which among other things appears in their belief in a 'supernatural' birth. Their ideas of animal and plant spirits who partake of the nature of human souls and are even regarded as the souls of ancestors, as well as their custom of naming newborn children after animals and plants and at the same time after ancestors, seems to point to a general belief, now perhaps half forgotten, in the return of departed souls through a new birth. In fact, traces of the existence of a belief in such a rebirth are still to be found. 'After a long time the souls of the dead are again reborn in some of their descendants; this is the reason why we give to a newborn child the [218] name of one of its forefathers.' Such was the explanation which was given me by an old medicine-man with whom I discussed these questions. Other Jibaros again assured that they did not know anything about the rebirth of the departed. Evidently these are questions to which common people in the Jibaro society, and especially younger persons, devote but little thought."

I: Karsten--218-219 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro-1
116, 842, 821 (1928-29)

"Their ideas about conception and pregnancy are more definite. Conception according to their idea is brought about by the new moon in connection with the natural sexual intercourse. The new moon is also believed to effect the menstruation of the women, of which physiological process the Jibaros use the expression nanta weinihama, 'the moon has seen her.' The time most suited for cohabitation and conception is that falling between the 'dying' moon and the following new moon. During this time the Jibaro usually has intercourse with his wives with a view to begetting children. He is however of opinion that as a rule a woman cannot be made pregnant by one single act of sexual intercourse. Several are necessary; the new being has to be created as it were by degrees, the moon always playing the part of a promotor of the creating process. When the Jibaro has cohabited with his wife in the period between two moons, the following new moon will in some mysterious way bring about the first development of the foetus. Every following new moon, in connection with repeated cohabitation, adds a little to it until in the course of nine months the foetus is full-grown and the birth takes place.

This statement of the Jibaros must be understood to mean that the germ of the new human being comes from man, who at the sexual act simply puts it into the woman, just as a seed is sown in the earth, the new moon thereby effectively aiding in developing the foetus. This primitive view, which in South America is by no means limited to the

Jibaros (1), is of interest in so far as it explains a custom which among these Indians also occurs in a modified form, namely, the custom of couvade. If the child, at least physiologically, has its proper origin in the father, we can understand the close connection or 'sympathy' existing between the father and his newborn babe, manifesting itself in that for instance the food eaten by the former will affect the latter for good or for evil. These ideas we shall consider again in the chapter on the birth customs.

The present-day Indian is thus firmly convinced that a woman can-[219]not conceive without having intercourse with a man. But the mediator of the process of conception need not necessarily be a living man, he may also be a dead one, that is, a spirit or demon. From this point of view we may speak of a supernatural birth in regard to the Jibaros, namely, in so far as they believe that a spirit or demon can have sexual intercourse with a woman and generate a child. This belief is quite common among the Jibaros and the Indians of Canelos, as among various other tribes in Ecuador, and has influenced the customs they observe at the birth of a child and even their marriage customs, as we have seen in the case of the Canelos Indians."

"1. See my Civilization of the South American Indians, p. 445 sq."

1: Karsten--219-221 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro-1
116, 842, 776 (1928-29)

"Conception through a demon, resulting in an evil birth and a monstrous child, may take place under different circumstances.

When among the CANELOS INDIANS a woman is menstruating she is obliged to diet and does not leave the house except for the most urgent needs. If she goes alone into the forest she may meet the demon, supai, in the shape of a white man dressed in black clothes, who grasps her by the hand, leads her away, and seduces her. The women themselves are said to have a special liking for the supai meeting them in this shape and to yield readily to the temptation. They are, therefore, guarded by their husbands while menstruating.

The consequence of intercourse with the demon will be that the woman will either fall ill and die or give birth to a monstrous child with claws, with hair over the whole body, without ears, or deformed or defective in some other way. Such a monster is called supai huahua 'the son of a demon', and is invariably killed by the Indians who also regard the incident as particularly unlucky and ominous: they have the demon in a material shape in their midst. Among the Canelos Indians the supai huahua is buried alive in the forest. The father of the child, the supai, they say, will himself come and fetch his son; therefore it must not be directly killed but buried alive.

Generally, however, the demon appears to a woman in the shape of a beautiful Indian, painted red with roucou in the face and wearing a feather crown (tawasámba) on the head.

He mostly meets the woman in a dream, while she is sleeping, and tries to seduce her. If he has had intercourse with her two nights in succession, she will soon feel pains in the womb, and some time afterwards she will either die or give birth to a supai huahua.

The Canelos Indians told me about a young Indian woman who had lived alone with the supai in an uninhabited region on the Rio Rutúnu, [220] a small tributary to the Bobonaza. The supai had the shape of a beautiful Indian, well dressed and painted red in the face. He stayed with the woman one week as her husband, and every day brought her all sorts of game from the forest as well as fish. The woman had previously been beautiful and fat, but after that time she began to get thin and pine away and finally died. This was due to her having had intercourse with the supai.

One of the most formidable demons known to the Indians is the huge water boa, called amárum by the Quichua-speaking Indians. It is the original source of witchcraft and the souls of sorcerers especially are believed to take up their abode, temporaily [sic] or permanently, in this monster. Now, in the imagination of the Indians the rainbow (cuichi) is nothing but a huge boa in the air or, as they generally express it, the rainbow is the 'shadow of the boa'. One superstition held about this phenomenon is that it makes women pregnant! When the rainbow appears, therefore, the women who are menstruating ought not to go out lest an accident of this kind should happen to them. Especially if they are travelling and sleep alone at night in some shelter of palm leaves in the forest they are

liable to be visited by the cuichi supai (the rainbow demon) who has intercourse with them and makes them pregnant, the result of this cohabitation being as usual, a supai huahua.(1)

The Canelos Indians moreover believe that the demon, when he wants to visit a woman, may take the shape of a black, nocturnal bird which they call tulúlu. The tulúlu supai at night enters into the house where he assumes human shape and has intercourse with the woman while she is sleeping. Soon afterwards the woman falls ill, and some time later she will give birth to something evil.

"1. This superstition prevails both among the Napo and the Canelos Indians, but is particularly held by the mountain Indians from whom it has, perhaps, been propagated to the primitive tribes in the virgin forests of the east. At Pelileo, a village situated in the mountain regions of Central Ecuador, I was told about an Indian woman who had given birth to a dreadful monster, half a hairy pig, half a human being. The Indians explained the phenomenon by the woman having exposed herself to the embraces of the demon of the rainbow.

The Quichua-speaking women of the mountain regions also believe that they may be made pregnant by lizards and other similar animal beings entering into them. When an Indian woman sees a lizard therefore she jumps far away for fear of coming in contact with it."

Sometimes the demon takes the shape of a hawk (anga) and then has intercourse with a woman at night, during sleep. Afterwards she [221] gives birth to a supai huahua which is grey in colour, has the head and the eyes of a hawk and deformed legs. Such a monster, as already mentioned, is buried alive or at any rate killed."

1: Karsten--224 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro
116, 582, 842, 163 (1928-29)

"After the 'tobacco feast' the conjugal life of the Jibaro couple generally begins, in some cases--that is to say, when the girl is not very young--even immediately after betrothal. As a rule, however, the Jibaro woman does not become a mother until she is 16 or 17 years old; at any rate I have not among these Indians seen younger mothers. --The Canelos woman generally marries at a more mature age."

1: Karsten--232 [2]
116, 163, 842, 177

(1916-18) 1935
(1928-29)

Jivaro

"The number of children in a Jibaro family is generally great, partly of course owing to the existence of polygamy. The Jibaro man wants to have as many children as possible and it may happen--although of course only in exceptional cases--that he has ten children from the same woman. He is rightly of opinion that richness in wives and in children means richness in general, and that it adds to the power of the family and the tribe. He appreciates female children just as much as male children; both are in their way equally useful, and for the same reason he has, as we have seen, no objection to the birth of twins, against whom the Jibaros have not the same prejudice as most other Indians of Western Amazonas. If nevertheless the Jibaro tribes have constantly diminished, this is due to particular reasons, partly to the great mortality of Indian children in general in the first years of life, partly to the wars of extermination carried on between the different Jibaro tribes. The contact with the white race not only indirectly promotes a diminution of the Indians, but seems to have a direct, unfavourable influence upon nativity. This we may infer from the fact that in the families of the Canelos Indians the children are as a rule far fewer than among their savage neighbours, a state of things that can be observed almost everywhere in South America."

2: Stirling--119[2] (1930-1931) 1938 Jivaro
116, 753, 842

"The third disease spirit is Yabi. This spirit is described as appearing but rarely. It is said to have no face and is 'like a door.' The wishinu in calling it addresses it as a door, calling upon it to open. Yabi causes barrenness in women. The method of procedure in controlling this spirit is the same in general as the others.

A fourth spirit is Chingi. This spirit is controlled by the toucan (Tsucanga) and by the woodpecker (Tatash). All stomach troubles are caused by Chingi. The beak of the bird pecks at the entrails, thus producing the illness."

34:Harner E-4.5 (1956-1969)1973 SD9 Jivaro SD9

595
on the hunt is, however, viewed as dangerous by the man, it 224
being believed that after intercourse he is particularly sus- 833
ceptible to being bitten by a poisonous snake. Nevertheless, [82]
men often engage in sexual activity when they take their
wives hunting.

Men also claim that they would rather go hunting than to 224
engage in sexual relations with the possible consequence of 833
pregnancy, since babies interfere with the mobility of their 842
wives to accompany them in hunting. Therefore, men usually 595
state that they are reluctant to engage in sexual intercourse
more often than about once every six to eight days. Field
observations, of course, were difficult to make on this point,
but my impression is that these particular statements were
not too inconsistent with their behavior. Men also believe
that having more than one wife decreases, rather than in-
creases, the likelihood of reproduction. The reasoning is that
a second wife permits a man to spend more time hunting and
thus reduces the frequency of his acts of sexual intercourse.
The arduous, mountainous travel required in hunting may
also, in itself, divert potential sexual energies.

While many young wives seem to prefer the childless situ- 842
ation which makes it easy for them to go hunting with their
husbands, an attempt at contraception is usually only made
by single lovers. The attempt essentially employs sympathetic 842
magic rather than herbs and only is believed to work if the 756
male partner is a shaman. The girl brings him a raw chicken 789
egg, he blows on it, and she swallows the egg while he holds
her head underwater in a stream. This act is specific only to
the young man, and is believed to prevent the girl forever
from being impregnated by him. No vegetal abortives of any
kind are known.

Women often do want children and, if no conception takes 842
789

34:Harner E-4, 5 (1956-1969)1973 SD9 Jivaro SD9

842 [789] place after a long period of time, may resort to an anti-sterility remedy, which consists of the pulverized leg bone of a fox, which is mixed with manioc beer and drunk. Both men and women say that the preferred first child is a boy, which is justified on the basis that the father needs, and would enjoy having, a son to go hunting with him. Ideally, the birth of a son should be followed by that of a daughter. There is no clear-cut prejudice against offspring of one sex as against the other.

843 [824] The Jívaro are aware of the relationship between insemination and pregnancy, and predict that a fully mature woman can give birth to a baby when the *naitka* tree (botanical identification unknown) has flowered three times after her marriage. The *naitka* flowers twice a year, so their estimate is a year and a half. If the bride is just barely past puberty, they estimate that a longer period, five *naitka*, or two and a half years, is required.

[836] [848] Since premarital sexual relations are common, the birth of a child in a shorter period after marriage is not a cause for surprise. After the birth of the first baby, a three *naitka* minimum is estimated for the next.

[823] It is recognized that pregnant women have strange food cravings and may practice geophagy, something never done by anyone else in the society. They may eat, in small amounts, unfired pottery clay or the brown earth from tubular, above-ground anthills. When birth is expected within five days or so, the woman's diet is restricted to exclude the meat of certain wild birds.

844 Preparation for the birth primarily consists of placing two stout forked sticks, supporting a crossbar about two and a half feet above the ground, in the expectant mother's garden. At the time of birth, a clean banana leaf is placed under the